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ABSTRACT

These seven discussion papers present the views of two classroom teachers, two superintendents, a state Parent Teacher Association president, an elementary school principal, and a state school board member on the roles and responsibilities of parents, teachers, principals, the business community, and government in improving public education. The first paper stresses the necessity of a cooperative effort at the federal, state, and local government levels to provide advocacy for education and to support it with more funds. The second paper enumerates specific responsibilities for each of these government levels. The next paper presents a superintendent's five major responsibilities with respect to the school board, business community, parents, staff, and students. The role of parents and the Parent Teacher Association and the role of the principal in planning and carrying out reforms are discussed in the next two papers. The sixth paper looks at changes in Montana due to the current educational reform movement and the problem of funding reforms. The last paper describes a project in Columbus, Ohio, called "Organizing for the Nineties," which is sponsoring long term planning to use all possible community resources for education. (CB)

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[SESSION ON ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES]

FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN PROVIDING EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

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PRESENTED BY

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AT THE NATIONAL FORUM ON EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

DECEMBER 8, 1983

As a teacher I would be among the first to agree that something has gone awry in public education. Through the social and educational revolution of the 60's and 70's, the schools acquiesced to the demands of society whether those demands were educationally appropriate or not. In the process of responding to society's criticisms and romanticized goals, the schools lost their sense of purpose and their deference to quality performance.

Today the public schools are impoverished in funding, purpose, and spirit. The level of necessary funding far outstrips both the capability and the willingness of the local taxpayer to provide. The underpinnings of public support for the schools have eroded.

The middle class has fled the public schools, particularly in the urban areas. This flight has left a disproportionately large number of culturally disadvantaged, handicapped, minority, and limited-English-proficient students in the schools. Many of those remaining are the children of the dispossessed of this land. Eking out sustenance for survival is success enough for these families. There is no time, energy, or where-with-all to lobby necessary support for their children's schools.

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The infrastructure of the public schools is in decay. We work in the vestigial remains of buildings which were once the pride of the community. Drab, deteriorated buildings, nearly inoperable heating systems, and broken and unhealthy lavatory facilities abound.

Our days as teachers are filled with hoping to keep our charges and ourselves safe from undisciplined classmates and intruders, while attempting to teach those who are ill-fed, ill-clothed, over-tired, and often unwilling learners. Basic supplies are often lacking, and books (obsolete or otherwise) are sometimes too few and too precious to be taken home for study.

The indignities to which teachers are often subjected have deeply diminished morale and motivation. Such indignities have created a self-image so negative that many good people leave the profession, and education can attract neither the most competent, nor even the modestly competent to the field. The effect of less competent teachers further demoralizes those remaining.

The public chides us for the effects of the educational revolution they demanded, and in a society where success and respect are measured by a person's income, we are inadequately compensated for the responsibility entrusted to us, the level of education we must have, and the disdain we must endure. It is no surprise that bright college students spurn the idea of dedicating their lives to the education of others.

School administrators yearly engage in the bureaucratic, budgetary paper chase. They reduce and involuntarily reassign staff, reorganize programs, and cut essential supplies in a vain attempt to make do with inadequate funding, which can only provide a bare-bones, below poverty level education.

Finally, education is highly susceptible to the faddists; management-by-objectives; performance contracting; multi-unit schools; open classrooms, vouchers, and now merit pay and tuition tax credits. It will serve no useful purpose to reward the few and degrade the many with merit pay, and it would be a fatal error to aid and abet the deterioration and resegregation of the public schools through the enactment of tuition tax credits. These quick, slick remedies only mask symptoms. They do not provide cures.

The recent spate of reports on education has been welcomed by the teachers of this country as verification of what we have been saying all along. We are pleased to have education, the step-child of society for so long, back as a high priority item for the future of America and agree that much must be done to set things right.

We must strive to draw back into the public schools those who have forsaken them. Only when the population distribution within the schools reflect that of the community in general will public education be turned around. Yet, not until we show a good faith effort at striving for excellence will that redistribution begin to take place.

In this quest for excellence, it is the role of government at all levels to be advocates for education. Indeed, the Commission on Excellence stated in its report that "It is essential...for government at all levels to affirm its responsibility for nurturing the Nation's intellectual capital."

It is the Federal government's role to set priorities for this country. It does so by committing fiscal resources at higher levels in certain areas of the budget. If the Federal government is serious and honest

in its desire to improve the quality of public education, it must provide enlightened leadership through a vastly increased funding effort in the area of education.

Revenue-sharing for education, grants-in-aid for excess costs of special populations programs, increased categorical and block grants, general assistance aid, incentive scholarships for qualified students who enter teacher preparation programs, and infrastructure grants to restore or replace physical plants are some possible funding options.

The state must also provide leadership in education. State education agencies are regulatory in nature. They should affirm the quality of the teachers and administrators through appropriate certification standards, including a review of the adequacy of teacher preparation programs. They must assure the maintenance of appropriate standards in the local communities and insure "equal educational availability" of programs options throughout the state.

Using measures of the ability and the willingness of a local community to pay, the state should, on a formula basis, provide fiscal resources to maintain developed standards.

Local government is responsible for providing adequate funding of its schools. Again, leadership to set appropriate levels of taxation and spending is imperative.

Local school boards have the responsibility for setting policy and budget levels which will provide the most appropriate educational program for each student.

Specifically, at this particular time, to restore quality in the schools, school board policies must allow authority and structure to return to the schools. Core requirements must be reinstated.

Minimum competencies must be replaced with a higher standard. Curriculum revision and textbook review must be ongoing with significant input from the teachers who will use the materials. Inservice opportunities must be a component of all such revisions. An environment which fosters innovation, creativity, and sharing among teachers must be developed. Appropriately competitive salaries must be provided to attract and retain qualified staff.

It appears obvious that the same responsibilities exist at all levels. Leadership in recognizing quality public education as a high priority for America, a commitment to provision of adequate fiscal resources, and strong advocacy of high quality public schools are recurrent themes. It is clear that securing excellence for the public schools will only occur when there is a positive partnership of singular purpose at all levels of government.

GOVERNMENTAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
Presented at the National Forum on Excellent in Education

Arthur Bruning

My charge at this session is to present a local superintendent's perspective on governmental roles and responsibilities. I shall attempt to do so as directly and succinctly as possible.

There are two primary assertions upon which my remarks will be based:

1) That the local communities have the most fundamental responsibility for excellence in education, followed by the State and finally by the Federal Government.

2) That it is absolutely essential each level of government assume its appropriate responsibilities if American education is to succeed.

These assertions are quite obviously based upon certain fundamental beliefs about society and the role that education should play in society.

1) I am convinced that succeeding in an information society will require that individuals assume primary responsibility for their own life-long education. This cannot adequately be done by units of government.

2) The role of educational institutions is to assist individuals to participate in active life-long education. I sincerely believe that excellence will not be accomplished through prescriptive, top-down institutions. Rather, individual learners must actively participate in the decisions that affect them.

3) Educational decision-making is diffused throughout government. While state and federal governments must play an important role, decision-making must take place within local learning communities wherein the learner, the learners family, the professional educators, and the community itself are interactive partners in the process.

The preceeding values system provides a critical framework for differentiation of roles and responsibilities in American Public Education. Specific implications for various stakeholders are as follows:

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT - The Federal Government has the most remote governmental relationship with public education, yet its relationship is no less fundamental than those of the state or local school board. Its essential responsibilities include:

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1) Affixing and enabling the role of states.

2) Assuring rights of individuals.

3) Formulating and enhancing essential national policy interests.

4) Enabling appropriate resources.

5) Funding research and development, and disseminating successful educational models.

THE STATE GOVERNMENT - Education should indeed be a primary function of the state. Effective public schools cannot possibly exist unless states assume certain critical responsibilities, such as:

1) Assuring viable local districts and viable local unit governance.

2) Identifying and assuring minimum educational opportunities (including both minimum requirements and local district accountability systems).

3) Enabling local districts to substantially exceed minimum state requirements.

4) Providing resources - to fund mandated programs and assure that local districts have access to funds necessary to support programs elected by local constituents, and to provide models, leadership and incentives for excellence in local districts.

LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS - The role of local school districts is most critical of all. Local districts provide the forum for choice, the arena for action, the context for ultimate success or failure of American education. Functions include:

1) Formulating curriculum and instruction necessary to achieve requirements of state and federal governments; and concomitantly, maintaining accountability to state and federal governments for results.

2) Providing an array of enriched learning opportunitites desired and supported by the local communities, and maintaining accountability for results to the local community.

3) Engaging individual learners in proactive life-time learning opportunities, and maintaining accountability to individual learners for the outcomes they contract to achieve.

In closing, I want to emphasize three or four increasingly serious content concerns. They are:

1) That the question of appropriate roles and relationships among governing bodies be carefully reviewed. The heat is on for educational reform, and I'm concerned that the political need to respond does not usurp the autonomy needed by local districts to build excellence into their delivery systems. Real change will not occur without the proper balance of autonomy and responsibility.

2) That freedom of choice versus programmatic mandates be thoughtfully balanced. Parents are demanding that an appropriate scope of choices be made available to them and their children. Rather than repressing the scope of choices in our public schools, we should be more intelligently addressing the quality of the options from which parents may choose.

3) That our response to the choices for educational reform ultimately be qualitative rather than quantitative. Longer school terms, higher graduation requirements, mandated testing, merit pay for teachers are all being highly touted; some may even be helpful. I suspect, however, that the issue of excellence will ultimately require more substantive resolution. Quantitative solutions relieve popular symptoms, but only substantive curricula and good solid teaching performance will <u>treat</u> the disease of encroaching mediocrity.

4) <u>Finally</u>, I am vitally concerned that reassessment of roles and responsibilities be undertaken in the context of assuring both equity and excellence. Tremendous gains have been earned during the past two decades for Americans of all races, creeds and native abilities. As we struggle to meet needs for high student achievement, it is imperative that we do not disenfranchise or disrespect those preordained by God or man to finish among the "also rans" in the race for achievement. To make a man or woman, much less a child, feel more or less worth because of factors beyond their control is not only wrong, it is vicious and debilitating, and it will truly cause us to be a "nation at risk".

EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION
National Forum -- Indianapolis, Indiana

December 8-11, 1984

Speech by Dr. Norman B. Eisen
Superintendent, Whittier Union High School District

Thank you very much Governor Orr. Let me say that it is a real pleasure just as it was a mind boggling opportunity to share with you, and as I did with President Reagan last summer, what I consider to be my major role and just a few of my major responsibilities as the Superintendent of an average size school district in California. I will be taking the focus away from the federal government down to a local school district. I might say that I see as my major role to maintain a district climate that is conducive to optimum achievement by both students and employees or staff, and to that I would like to address five major responsibilities because of the time limit.

1. To expect hig standards of students and staff. And I like to think that limited funds is really no excuse for poor quality. I think the problems that we face today are not because of lack of diversity, but because we have tried to do too many things with the few dollars that we have. So my philosophy, at least in our District, is to insist on doing well whatever we undertake to do, and insist on quality. People need to be motivated and stretched. Students should be pushed by the courses they take. In our district we are over the era of the grade point average. The notion that "I'm going to take an easier class so that I can get to college with a higher grade point average." We need to stretch students to take courses that they ought to take and need to take, and we must motivate them in the way they perform in those classes. The way they perform in achievement, and also the way they perform in discipline and attendance. We heard a lot about that these past few days so we'll go on to standards for our employees.

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And I might say that the key as I see it is to have administrators of high caliber, selected for skills of motivation and dedication, if you will, and selected by a thorough, rather than a political process.

For too many years, many school systems have selected their administrators because they were outstanding coaches or because they were popular in some other arena. We have gone to a very thorough, arduous process of selecting our school district and school administrators and low and behold I'm proud to say that we have excellent ones. It's my responsibility to select administrators and middle managers who are the true quality control arm of the school system, and in my view that is the major reason we managers exist--to be the quality control arm of the school system, who will settle for nothing short of everyone's best effort. And then it is my role to select skilled and dedicated teaching and nonteaching staff. And let's not teach at all what we can't teach well. We have enough aversion behavior from students without creating more. So let's not teach at all what we can't teach well, and let's not ever tolerate poor teaching.

2. My second major responsibility as I see it is to, and I haven't heard too much about this in two days, is to develop and maintain a model employee relations program which then will bring about an amicable or cooperative labor relations program. Now some of you are not in a collective bargaining state, California is heavily collective bargaining, and it is my feeling that good employee relations breed good Labor relations. I feel very strongly that an illtreated employee could be your next union militant. An unhappy teacher is rarely one who does an outstanding job. An employee's self motivation stems from the way he or she perceives he is being treated, and if he perceives that he is treated with esteem and dignity, with appreciation, then and only then, do we have a right to expect that that person will do the best job possible.

I think that we as Superintendents, and I certainly feel as my major responsibility that it is important to recognize and internalize that all people responsible for the education of youngsters are true partners in the process. Perhaps not equal partners, but partners. Certainly not adversaries. We need to recognize and internalize that optimum learning cannot occur if staff morale is low. And we need to recognize and internalize that where teacher or nonteacher labor unions exist they do not necessarily have to be the enemy.

3. A third responsibility I have is to earn good school board members. I feel that a well administered school system attracts good school board members. And good potential school board members must be encouraged to run. I try to make it rewarding for a board member to be a board member, by listening to each member and not just the majority vote. Because the person runs for the school board not to be a piece of five, or seven, or sixteen, but for certain aspirations of his or her own. And I believe in giving the school board justified credit for successes of the system. I believe in nurturing board members and giving them the three P's - PERKS, PRAISE and PRIDE.

4. The fourth responsibility is to insist that parents do their share and I believe that I can do that by keeping them constantly informed, and we do that very often. We have produced a brochure giving parents hints on handling their youngsters--in terms of discipline, drugs, attendance, achievement in school, etc. Parents need help because there is a dirth of courses in parenting these days. There certainly was in those days. We must hold parents accountable as do many private schools by insisting that they enforce our homework policy, discipline policy, attendance policy and so forth.

5. My fifth responsibility is to develop partnerships with the business community. How do you do that? I believe it's by being sensitive to the needs of the business community, particularly their employment needs. Make the business community feel welcome in the school environment, and by the way, I believe that it's up to the school system to provide the outreach for this. And then what happens? Demonstrate needed help and support and that will earn it. In thirty-two years in the Whittier Union High School District in Whittier, California I have never asked any business person in our community for anything for youngsters and been refused.

In summary, let me say that it is up to me as a Superintendent to maintain an optimum district climate. I have selected five major responsibilities.

1. To expect high standards of students and staff
2. To maintain a model employee relations program
3. Earn good school board members
4. Insist that parents do their share
5. develop partnerships with the business community.

All difficult to accomplish perhaps, but I am certain that they are attainable to achieve excellence. And Ladies and Gentlemen, I feel that we have no choice. Thank you.

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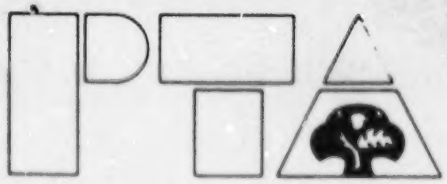

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REMARKS PRESENTED AT EXCELLENCE ON EDUCATION FORUM
DECEMBER 8, 1983 - INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
MRS. ANN JAMES, ALABAMA STATE PTA PRESIDENT

" ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES"

AFTER VOLUMES OF INFORMATION AND ADVICE HAS BEEN PRINTED AND DISCUSSED ON HOW TO BRING ABOUT EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION, WE COME BACK TO THE REALITY OF TRYING TO ACHIEVE THAT END.

I ADDRESS YOU TODAY WITH THE CONVICTION THAT IN ORDER TO APPROPRIATELY EDUCATE THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF THIS NATION WE MUST ACCEPT THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR SHORTCOMINGS AS PARENTS, EDUCATORS, GOVERNMENT LEADERS, BUSINESSMEN AND WOMEN AND CITIZENS OF THIS COUNTRY.

WE MUST LOOK HONESTLY AND OPENLY AT THE FAULT WITHIN OUR OWN RANKS. WE MUST BE WILLING TO CHANGE. WE MUST ADMIT THAT THE STUDENT OF TODAY HAS A NEW AND DIFFERENT WAY OF THINKING AND LEARNING. WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF TELEVISION, VIDEO GAMES AND COMPUTERS, THESE YOUNG MINDS ARE BEING INTERESTED, CHALLANGED AND MOTIVATED MORE OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM THAN INSIDE.

NO GENERATION HAS SEEN THE AMOUNT OF CHANGE NOR EXPERIENCED THE PRESSURES WITH WHICH OUR CHILDREN AND YOUTH MUST COPE. THEY ARE THE RESULTS OF THE FIRST GENERATION OF PARENTS TO FALL FOR THE "ME-FIRST" PHILOSOPHY -- THE IDEA THAT "I MUST FULFILL MYSELF, DO MY OWN THING, EVEN THOUGH I NEGATE OR NEGLECT MY RESPONSIBILITIES AS A PARENT".

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HAVING LOST MY OWN PARENTS AT AN EARLY AGE, I HAVE ALWAYS FELT MY RESPONSIBILITY AS A PARENT VERY DEEPLY. INTEREST IN THE EDUCATIONAL WELFARE OF MY OWN CHILDREN LED ME TO INVOLVEMENT IN THE PTA. IN MY ROLE AS STATE PRESIDENT, I HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO SEE SOME FANTASTIC PRODUCTS OF GOOD, EFFECTIVE PARENTING. IF WE ADD ACCESS TO A QUALITY EDUCATION TO THEIR OPPORTUNITIES, THERE IS NO LIMIT TO THE GOALS THESE STUDENTS CAN ACHIEVE.

IT WILL TAKE HARD WORK AND COMMITTMENT BY ALL FACTIONS OF OUR SOCIETY TO PROVIDE EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION. AS PARENTS AND CITIZENS WITHIN EACH COMMUNITY, WE MUST BE VIGILANT . AFTER THE POLITICAL RHETORIC AND FOCUS ON EDUCATION REFORM HAS DIED DOWN, WE MUST BE THE STALWART GUARDIANS OF THE STUDENTS FUTURE. WE MUST BECOME POLITICALLY ACTIVE AT THE LOCAL , STATE AND FEDERAL LEVEL. ANYONE WHO THINKS THAT POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT IS NOT NECESSARY IN ORDER TO OBTAIN REPRESENTATION IS INDEED NAIVE. WE MUST ADDRESS ISSUES AS THEY AFFECT OUR CHILDRENS PRESENT AND THEIR FUTURE. WHO ELSE IS CONCERNED SOLELY WITH THE WELFARE OF THE CHILD?

PARENTS MUST HAVE AN INFORMED PART IN THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS OF THE EDUCATION STRUCTURE. WE MUST HAVE A VOICE WITH PRINCIPALS, SUPERINTENDENTS, SCHOOL BOARDS, ON ADVISORY COMMITTEES DEALING WITH TEACHER TRAINING REQUIREMENTS AND CERTIFICATION STANDARDS, TEXTBOOKS, COURSES OF STUDY, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, SPECIAL EDUCATION, BUDGETARY PRIORITIES, ETC. WE MUST BECOME INFORMED AND INVOLVED AND THEN

REQUIRE ACCOUNTABILITY. WE MUST NOT ONLY PUSH FOR UP-TO-DATE PROGRAMS IN MATH, SCIENCE AND COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY, BUT WE MUST UPDATE TEACHING STYLES. RATHER THAN ONLY FEEDING CHILDREN SET INFORMATION WHICH THEY PARROT, WE MUST GIVE THEM DECISION MAKING SKILLS. THEY MUST LEARN HOW TO INTERACT POSITIVELY WITH OTHERS -- HOW TO SPELL NOT ONLY IN SPELLING CLASS BUT IN HISTORY CLASS AS WELL.

AS PARENTS WE MUST SERVE AS ROLE MODELS FOR OUR CHILDREN. WE MUST DO OUR PART IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS BY SENDING STUDENTS INTO OUR SCHOOLS WITH A DEGREE OF DISCIPLINE, RESPECT, A GOOD VALUE SYSTEM AND A DESIRE TO ACHIEVE.

TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS MUST BE WILLING TO ACCEPT PARENTS AS EQUAL PARTNERS IN THE EDUCATION SCHEME. EDUCATORS SHOULD BE PAID A DECENT WAGE FOR THEIR SERVICES. THE PUBLIC IS WILLING TO SEE THAT WAGE IS PAID BUT WITH THE IDEA THAT GOOD TEACHERS ARE REWARDED AND THAT SOME SYSTEM FOR INCENTIVE OR ADVANCEMENT IS SET IN PLACE.

GOVERNMENT LEADERS AT THE STATE LEVEL MUST LEAD THE WAY IN PERSUING QUALITY EDUCATION BY ADDRESSING POSITIVE LEGISLATION TO INSURE HIGH STANDARDS FOR EDUCATION WITHIN THEIR COMMUNITY AND STATE.

TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTES MUST STRENGTHEN THEIR PROGRAMS IN ORDER TO PRODUCE BETTER QUALIFIED TEACHERS.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD PROVIDE US WITH A NATIONAL, UNIFORM LONGE RANGE GOAL FOR EDUCATION. THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE, MONITORING APPROACH CAN BE VERY EFFECTIVE. AT THIS LEVEV EL THERE SHOULD BE SOME ATTENTION TO THE EQUITY OF DOLLARS SPENT. DOES IT MAKE SENSE TO

SPEND EXCESSIVE AMOUNTS OF MONEY ON FOREIGN AID AND THE MILITARY AND NOT PROVIDE FOR ADEQUATE EDUCATION FOR OUR OWN CHILDREN. WHILE I BELIEVE IN STRONG NATIONAL DEFENSE, WE MUST HAVE CITIZENS WHO ARE EDUCATED ENOUGH TO USE OUR SOPHISTICATED WEAPONRY.

WE IN PTA HAVE OUR OWN WORKBOOK FOR IMPROVING PUBLIC EDUCATION. IT WAS FIRST PRINTED IN 1958 WITH PERIODIC REVISIONS -- THE LATEST BEING IN 1982. IT IS C LLED "LOOKING IN ON YOUR SCHOOLS" AND IS A PLAN FOR COOPERATIVELY SURVEYING EVERY ASPECT OF YOUR LOCAL SCHOOL. AT OUR NATIONAL CONVENTION IN ALBUQUERQUE THIS SUMMER, PRESIDENT REAGAN CHALLANGED EACH ATTENDEE TO GET ONE OF THESE BOOKLETS, READ IT AND FOLLOW UP ON ITS SUGGESTIONS.

EACH OF US, WHATEVER OUR ROLE IN THE EDUCATION PROCESS MUST BE MORE CONCERNED WITH THE PRESENT AND FUTURE NEEDS OF OUR STUDENTS THAN WE ARE IN PROJECTING OR PERPETUATING OUR OWN SELF-INTEREST. WE MUST RETURN TO AN ATTITUDE OF CITIZENSHIP, STATESMANSHIP AND PATRIOTISM IN OUR NATION AND INSTILL THOSE FEELINGS IN OUR YOUNG. THEY ARE THE FUTURE OF THIS COUNTRY, THEY ARE OUR FUTURE. WE MUST ALL WORK TOGETHER TO PREPARE THESE FUTURE LEADERS BY GIVING THEM A STRONG VALUE SYSTEM AND APPROPRIATE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.

I AM FIRMLY CONVINCED THAT THROUGH THE CREDIBILITY, OBJECTIVE S AND DETERMINATION OF PTA WE CAN IMPACT POSITIVELY ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN OUR COUNTRY -- AND WE PLAN TO DO JUST THAT!

NAESP

National Association of Elementary School Principals

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Presented by: Gilmon W. Jenkins
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Indianapolis, IN
December 6-3, 1983

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PRINCIPAL IN EDUCATION REFORM

I want to express my appreciation and the appreciation of the National Association of Elementary School Principals for the opportunity to appear on this panel.

The Role and Responsibility of the school principal in the reform movement is indeed awesome. Historically, local school administrators have worked under and implemented decisions and policies handed down by central office administrators and boards of education.

Principals and principals associations must speak loud and clear on a number of issues that impact upon the quality of instruction available to the students under our care. Special interest groups have had and still have influence upon what should be a part of the curriculum. Many times courses of instruction although seemingly appropriate, indeed impede the basic purpose of teaching children the fundamentals so necessary for the excellence called for in A Nation at Risk.

Public education has been given the task of solving social issues that impact negatively upon the instructional program. These issues quite urgently needed solutions and indeed continue to beg for solutions, but the result has been that resources have been diverted from the central purpose of education.

Principals and principals associations must continue to stress, that quality leadership at the local school level makes the difference between a mediocre and an excellent school. Leadership demands a clear sense of purpose and must have a vision that goes beyond the immediate. Excellent leaders are highly intentional people and must develop and master interpersonal skills as well as enhance people's sense of worth.

We must develop leadership skills to deal with local school staffs in radically different, but positive ways. Principals and their staff must rebuild the trust and goodwill educators enjoyed in years past. Our enemies are not behind the classroom door and in my judgement they never were. Principals

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who seek input from the staff have the advantage of the experience and expertise of everyone around them in addition to enabling the staff to "buy into" whatever reforms are being implemented.

The charge to every leader at this National Forum and indeed to all principals in this nation, is to strenthen their competencies as educators, providing the very best school experience for the students under their supervision. This can be done through a vigorous determined commitment to the profession. Educators and the lay public must be bold and imaginative in whatever approach we take to implementing reforms. The people who originate reforms must also be bold and imaginative, keeping in mind that programs of reform must not be handed down by edict. It is a simple fact that reforms are not reforms unless they touch the child in the classroom. It is also a fact that reforms have a far greater chance for success if the professional who works in the school on a day to day basis has the opportunity for input from its inception, therefore an opportunity to again "buy into it."

It would be my hope, that Principals and Principals Associations could become full partners in originating and developing the ideas that lead to reform. In my judgement, we have already begun to see the development of damaging, piecemeal and counterproductive quick-fixes being developed by organizations and individuals with little experience in the day to day operations of the education enterprise. These ideas are being advanced in some cases by non-educators who are making judgements drawn out of their experiences as students.

As principals implement reforms, each of us must keep in mind that a positive self-image is every child's right, and indeed should be a goal for which we consciously strive. Children have the inalienable right to feel comfortable about themselves and the world around them. All educators must realize anew, what a force we have in the collective student body of this great country and that many children will mold their lives based upon in-school relationships.

Principals and all educators must insure that all students receive equal educational opportunities. If our discussion of school improvement continues to take place without careful attention to equity, we are in danger of creating a permanent underclass of under-educated, unskilled Americans. The goals of equity and excellence do not necessarily conflict. Our quest for excellence, must not exclude any child, under-rate their abilities or dismiss their right to equal access to education. All children deserve the same chance to excel and it is the responsibility of us all to see that they have it.

In closing I must say we have a concern that the reforms proposed in "A Nation At Risk" miss the target in seeking to create real, lasting improvement. That concern is that the emphasis on excellence is almost exclusively focused on secondary and higher education. Elementary schools provide the foundation for life-long learning for America's children.

Educators know that educational excellence demands knowledge, enthusiasm for learning, self-motivation and self-discipline. These qualities are best taught, easiest learned and most effectively implemented at the elementary school level. Experience and research prove that high school is, for most students, too late.

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Indianapolis Conference on Excellence

SEEKING FOR EXCELLENCE: ROLES PEOPLE PLAY

Education reform must happen. Everyone from parents to the President insists that the reshaping of education shall occur now while national focus on change is strong and pervasive. Large segments of the nation's leadership have committed themselves to drastic action. Governors have organized Task Forces for acquiring information on which to base policy decisions and recommendations to legislators. Some governors have mandated funding increases already. Together governors and legislators of several states are studying the issues of merit pay for teachers, extending the school year [illegible] raising graduation requirements and testing students and teachers for competency. Governors and state boards of education have initiated dialogue with the general public to learn opinions of parents, the business community and other taxpayers.

Specifically, boards of education, like Montana's, have merged national report proposals with current agendas. Six months ago, for instance, the Montana board planned a teacher certification workshop for December. Now, the scope of the agenda has changed to consider recommendations from the reports as well as action on our original goals. For state board members, another natural role is functioning as member of state task forces. Montana's Task Force, appointed by Governor Schwinden, includes a majority of Public Education board members and Regents. Never before in history have the two boards coordinated efforts so compatibly to develop policies that will strengthen students' transition from secondary education to college.

As a climax of the Montana Task Force 1983 activities, town meetings have been planned to convene in every community in the state on February 14, 19[illegible], to elicit current attitudes and recommendations of parents, educators, professional and business people about education. In addition, to follow the town meeting, an education poll will be taken based on questions stimulated by the town meetings. Resulting from these endeavors, the Governor, the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Public Instruction will make informed decisions for change.

Education and business: Spotlighting the need for future collaboration between business/industry and education, in Montana hands are joined to raise expectations and standards for the work force. Since accountability is a favorite concept of the business community as well as of the public at large, Montana's Board of Public Education is tracking exactly how much money is spent not only on teachers-- personnel and the curriculum--but the cost of choral music, art and sports. This new approach for our board will allow the formation of focus on relative investments in various programs and will allow the school system to plan for appropriate allocation of resources. Another part of this endeavor is to show how Foundation program expenditures are related to minimum requirements as detailed by the state accreditation standards, and eventually how the expenditures relate to student accomplishment. In other words we hope to apply the GAAFR principles to education.

Professional education organizations in Montana are offering workshops, seminars, forums and inservice training to assist their constituents to understand the nature of reform and structuring new solutions to old problems such as use of time, increased pay for teachers, inservice training (professional development) and upgrading the curriculum.

Some parents are becoming more deeply involved in school affairs-- requesting information about graduation requirements, assuring school personnel of their plans for future cooperation to keep errant children in school, requiring home work and urging

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sons and daughters to register for more difficult course work. (The involvement of these parents, who have been uneasy to down right critical over the past decade, should be encouraged.

Idealistically all indications that reformation will occur appear hopeful because numerous components of society are making a strenuous effort to better prepare students for a complex world. But, realistically, where are we and where are we going? When financial support does not materialize, when the attention of the public is drawn to another crisis, when the ramifications of the national report recommendations begin to appear too idealistic to achieve, when then?

One of the huge "unknowns," of course, is how much money is needed and how much is available? Many conservatives say we cannot solve problems by throwing money at them. (One columnist quipped recently, "But can we bring about change by throwing reports at our problems?")

Let's go back to the optimistic point of view, and take a quick look at what might be achieved without money. For one thing, colleges of education could more carefully screen applicants to sort out the best and brightest, and provide a better program. But that may be too idealistic, since enrollments are dimishing and schools of higher education need all the students they can get. Moreover, to change the teacher preparation program would take a major overhaul, we are told.

Curriculum in the high school is another area where something might be achieved without a major infusion of funds. The way this would happen is for state boards of education to (1) prescribe rigid graduation requirements which leave no time for electives or easy subjects; (2) to require clear goals and objectives and an evaluation of students in terms of the goals.

Without much money native creativity and ingenuity can be applied to educational systems. But these will not pay for higher teacher salaries, for improving libraries, for equipping science classes with laboratory apparatus.

Since publication of the national reports, a few states are looking towards appropriating large amounts of money for upgrading their schools. A number of states are preparing to request additional finances from their legislatures. Some states have no plans at all for investing additional dollars for education. The recently approved federal funding resolution appropriating amounts for 1984 stripped education back to about the same level as 1983. Where is the commitment expressed here at this conference by national and state officials-- when it comes to voting for dollars for education?

Will citizens insist we pay more taxes for reform of their school system? Will business and professional peaople as a portion of their commitment, request tax raises?

And how shall we grasp the large and thorny issue of equity and excellence?

When the glow wears off and the national reports are filed away, who will see to it that some of the recommendations, at least, are implemented?

We who are in this room today and all conference attendees are the ones. We had better make a solemn pledge to keep the reform flame alive and burning, so that indeed we can proceed to improve that enterprise called education which is at the heart of everything we attempt as a nation.

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ORGANIZING FOR THE NINETIES

Supporting for education is every citizen's obligation, for all of society benefits when our educational system works, but specifically, I believe that the primary responsibility for funding lies at the state and local level. . . with the state in order to provide a solid base, and with local communities in order to develop ownership, relying on federal funding for those monies and programs that cannot realistically be produced locally. Community ownership and involvement in the funding and other supports of public schools are vital ingredients in making them work.

Educational institutions have traditionally operated as isolated entities, separate and apart from business and industry and all the other elements that comprise a community, as though the one had nothing to do with the other. Furthermore, they have always approached their operation from a single-unit basis rather than a cooperative basis, causing duplication of effort and expenditure.

In the Columbus, Ohio, area, we are working to change that. In the belief successful schools are the responsibility of not only the educators but of the state and individual communities, The Center for Public Education, a privately-endowed, non-profit organization has initiated a project called "Organizing for the Nineties." The governing committee of this company, chaired by one person from education and one from the business community, is made up of representatives from almost every walk of life. . . .private and public school teachers and administrators; The Ohio State University and other local colleges and universities; the religious, artistic, and medical communities; business and industry; organized labor; the media; state and municipal governments; school boards; civic organization; the Chamber of Commerce; the State Department of Education; PTA, AND citizens-at-large. All have pledged

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resources in the form of manpower, equipment, and special services.

Whereas few public school systems have the capacity. . .indeed the luxury. . .of planning for the future, having their horizons frequently restricted to the next school year, or at best, the duration of the existing school levy, it is the goal of the "organizing for the nineties project" to assist school districts in planning ahead for the next decade by building community interest in education and by drawing upon all available resources. . .political, institutional, and financial, so that the Franklin County-Metropolitan Columbus community can continue to provide quality education in a time of scarce resources and changing demands.

To do this, the project is establishing a network of "Review and Analysis Panels," whose membership is specifically designated and represents the same broad spectrum of the community as the Project Committee itself. These groups are focusing on identifying long-range goal objectives and solutions for their own school districts as well as for the 17 public and vocational districts in the metropolitan area, which serves approximately 150,000 students. These Panels will determine their focus on the local level, do research and gather data for superintendents and school boards, and then furnish their findings to their districts. The districts may then elect to call upon the Project Committee, whose functions it is to serve as a network, a resource bank, or clearing house, which will link communities who share problems and concerns and/or indentify resources that may be drawn upon to aid in the solutions. Also, districts with identified successful programs will share their expertise with those who have a need in that area. The Center for Public Education has the task of securing funding and other resources for the Committee to recommend.

Resources that exist in the community but traditionally have not been available to schools are such things as professors and executives-on-loan, career and other information exchanges, money grants for specific purposes such as dissemination of innovative teaching techniques or units, management skills in-service training for

teachers and administrators, public relations know-how, computer expertise, and so on. Of course, the educational and business sectors must be responsive to each other. The broad base of funding for education must continue to come from tax money, but the impetus for educational reform may well come from concerned communities such as ours who, together with educators, believe that many minds and many pocketbooks are preferable to a few, and that reasonable people can identify reasonable goals and find workable solutions.

In our rapidly changing world, where technological advances occur almost as fast as we can read about them, and where education and the business sector must be responsive to each other, school districts must enlist and encourage the financial as well as the philosophical support of the communities in which they exist. Schools and communities must "pool their wealth" and maximize those resources which do not need to be purchased, since they already exist. Education can no longer be viewed as something unrelated to life. The hope for excellence in our schools lies in the ability of each district, in conjunction with its community, to examine its weaknesses and systematically and deliberately turn those weaknesses into strengths. Perhaps through involvement in such cooperative endeavors, all school districts will be able to generate the specific, localized objectives and resources needed to solve local problems and to move confidently into the decade of the nineties.

Presented on Governor Thomas Kean's panel by:

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